What is claimed is:

1. A virtual reality encounter system comprising:

a mannequin coupled to a camera for receiving a video image, the camera sending the video image to a communications network;

a processor for overlaying a virtual environment over one or more portions of the video image to form a virtual scene; and

a set of goggles to render the virtual scene.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the mannequin is a humanoid robot having tactile sensors positioned along the exterior of the robot, the sensors sending tactile signals to a communications network; the system further including a body suit having tactile actuators, the tactile actuators receiving the tactile signals from the communications network.

3. The system of claim 2, further comprising:

motion sensors positioned throughout the body suit, the motion sensors sending motion signals corresponding to movements of each sensor relative to a reference point, the motion signals transmitted to the communications network; and

a humanoid robot, receiving, from the communications network, the motion signals from the motion sensors, the motion signals from the motion sensors causing a movement of the robot that is correlated to a movement of the body suit.

4. The system of claim 3, wherein the robot includes motion actuators corresponding to the motion sensors, the motion actuators causing the robot to move.

5. The system of claim 3, wherein the robot has life-like features, the robot comprises:

a body; and

a microphone coupled to the body, the microphone for sending audio signals to the communications network.

6. The system of claim 5, wherein the set of goggles further includes a transducer to render audio signals received from the microphone.

7. The system of claim 6, the robot is at a first location and the set of goggles is at a second location the system further comprising:

a second humanoid robot in the second location, the second robot having a second microphone and a second camera; and

a second set of goggles to receive the video signals from the first camera and a second earphone to receive the audio signals from the first microphone.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein the communications network comprises:

a first communication gateway in the first location; and

a second communication gateway in the second location, the second processor connected to the first processor via a network.

9. The system of claim 6, wherein the communications network comprises an interface having one or more channels for:

receiving the audio signals from the microphone;

receiving the video image from the camera;

sending the audio signals to the set of goggles; and

sending the audio signals to the transducer.

10. The system of claim 6, wherein the body includes an eye socket and the camera is positioned in the eye socket.

11. The system of claim 6, wherein the body includes an ear canal and the microphone is positioned within the ear canal.

12. The system of claim 1, wherein the set of goggles, comprises a receiver to receive the virtual scene.

13. The system of claim 6, wherein the robot comprises a transmitter to wirelessly send the audio signals, the tactile signals, the motion signals and the video image to the communications network.

14. A method of having a virtual encounter, comprising:

receiving a video image at a camera coupled to a mannequin, the camera sending the video image to a communications network;

overlaying a virtual environment over one or more portions of the video image to form a virtual scene; and

rendering the virtual scene using a set of goggles.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the mannequin is a humanoid robot and further comprising:

sending tactile signals from the humanoid robot to a communications network, the tactile sensors positioned along the exterior of the robot; and

receiving the tactile signals from the communications network at a body suit having tactile actuators.

16. The method of claim 15, further comprising:

sending motion signals from motion sensors positioned throughout the surface of a human, the motion signals corresponding to movements of each sensor relative to a reference point, the motion signals being transmitted to a communications network;

receiving, at the humanoid robot, the motion signals sent by the motion sensors; and

causing a movement of the robot that is correlated to a movement of the human based on the motion signals received from the motion sensors.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein receiving comprises receiving motion signals from the motion sensors at corresponding motion actuators coupled to the robot, causing a movement comprises the motion actuators causing the robot to move.

18. The method of claim 14, further comprising:

sending audio signals over the communications network, the audio signals being produced from a microphone coupled to the robot; and

transducing the audio signals received from the communications network using a transducer embedded in the set of goggles.

19. The method of claim 18, further comprising:

sending audio signals to the communications network from a second microphone coupled to a second robot having life-like features;

sending a second video image to the communications network from a second camera coupled to the second mannequin;

rendering the second image received from the communications network onto a monitor coupled to a second set of goggles; and

transducing the audio signals received from the communications network using a second transducer embedded in the second set of goggles.

20. The method of claim 18, wherein the robot includes an eye socket and the camera is positioned in the eye socket.

21. The method of claim 18, wherein the robot includes an ear canal and further comprising positioning the microphone within the ear canal.

22. The method of claim 14, wherein the set of goggles, comprises a receiver to receive the virtual scene.

23. The method of claim 18, wherein the robot further comprises a transmitter to wirelessly send the audio signals and the video image to the communications network.